

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY



Marla Graff Decker, Secretary of Public Safety

SECRETARY'S CORNER

This Fall Newsletter highlights the good work that has been done by all of our Public Safety professionals over the last quarter. I hope this information serves you well in the coming months. Our Agencies continue to do a tremendous job and it has not gone unnoticed.

As Public Safety professionals you work diligently to provide for the safety of our Commonwealth. As 2012 draws to an end I would like to thank you for your service during the holiday season and all year round. I hope that you find time during this busy season to spend with family and friends. Please stay safe as we prepare for the New Year. Happy Holidays!



GOVERNOR AND FIRST LADY THANK VIRGINIA GUARD PERSONNEL FOR THEIR SERVICE

Governor Bob McDonnell and First Lady Maureen McDonnell expressed their appreciation for the service of Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, members of the Virginia Defense Force and civilian employees Sept. 11 during a visit at Mullins Armory in Sandston.

"The First Lady and I wanted to come out today primarily to offer our thanks on behalf of the 8.3 million Virginians for the phenomenal work you do day in and day out not only to protect Virginians, but the lives of Americans around the country and all over the world," McDonnell said. During his remarks, the Governor talked about the impact of the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. and said the Guard has done a remarkable job in defending freedom in the wake of those attacks.

Since September 11, 2001, the Virginia National Guard has successfully mobilized almost 15,000 Soldiers and Airmen for missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo and other locations across the world as well as homeland defense missions in the United States.

McDonnell pointed out that his family knows firsthand the difficult times families face during a military deployment. His daughter deployed to Iraq in 2005.

"Your families have endured a tough time as a result of what you had to do for your state and for your nation, and we are incredibly grateful," he said.

"At the end of the day, what is great about our country is that we have men and women like you that care so much about freedom and so much about the ideals of what our country stands for, that you are willing to go halfway around the world to fight for people you don't even know," McDonnell said. "It really is an extraordinary thing."



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STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY



Department of Corrections and Department of General Services Earn Honors

A group of current and former VADOC employees recently received honors for their efforts to streamline the Commonwealth's drug testing process.

The DOC team of *Richard Crossen, Rick Davis, Theresa Harris, Darryl Kerkeslage, Abhi Punje, Jody Rogish, Cindy Sager, Chris Thomas, and Melissa Welch* received the Governor's Award for Teamwork and the team was named a finalist in the Commonwealth of Virginia's Innovative Technology Symposium (COVITS) Governor's Technology Awards.

They joined forces with employees of the Department of General Services (DGS), Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services to find efficiencies, reduce duplication, and increase drug testing quality.

The entire team earned special praise for developing and improving the drug testing interface, but also did an impressive job of making changes to both the DGS and DOC database systems that capture sample and testing results.

OFFICERS PARTICIPATE IN FULL-SCALE ESCAPE EXERCISE

An inmate escapes. One officer is down. Another is missing. Authorities must launch an enormous manhunt into a densely forested state park known for its two deep bodies of water. "Escape at Twin Lakes" sounds like an action movie, but it is actually the name of a full-scale exercise by the Department of Corrections at Twin Lakes State Park in Prince Edward County. The September 27 drill tested the agency's ability to deal with just such a real-life emergency.

"I am happy to report that we met all of our exercise objectives," said Carlos Hernandez, the exercise director. During the eight-hour exercise, correctional officers conducted two exercises achieving their assigned objectives – finding both the actor portraying a missing officer and apprehending the actors portraying missing inmates.

"In a very brief time we established on-scene command and control using the Incident Command System. Security, operational communications and operational coordination were quickly set up," Mr. Hernandez said. "This was a very difficult exercise, which is exactly how we wanted it to be – recent, relevant and realistic training. Our officers responded effectively and many gained valuable experience that comes with this kind of practice," he added.



**EDUCATION IS KEY, WHICH IS WHY GOVERNOR McDONNELL AND SECRETARY DECKER
SUPPORT PROGRAMS ENSURING ACCESS TO THE MOST CURRENT PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING.**

"One of the core functions of government is ensuring the safety and security of our citizens."

– Governor Bob McDonnell

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY



Community Corrections Act Planning Session

DCJS convened a planning session of 30 Community Corrections Act (CCCA) stakeholders on October 12 at the State Capitol to discuss the state of local probation services and priorities for future planning. Since 1995, Virginia's Comprehensive Community Corrections Act has enabled localities to provide adult probation services to misdemeanants and non-violent felony offenders. After a presentation by DCJS staff and Lori Eville from the National Institute of Corrections, participants reviewed the CCCA's purpose from 1995, changes over the past 17 years and the current state of local probation through the lens of today's evidence-based policies and practice.

Those attending included city and county probation directors; judges; prosecutors; defense attorneys; staff from the legislative finance committees and the Department of Planning and Budget; representatives of the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia Association of Counties, local law enforcement and staff from the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court and the Sentencing Commission.

The group made several recommendations for DCJS and other agencies to consider as Virginia continues to improve law and practice that enhances public safety in the Commonwealth.



SMALL POLICE DEPARTMENTS RECEIVE NEW VEHICLES

On October 26, 2012, Virginia's Secretary of Public Safety, Marla Graff Decker, presented new patrol cars to five small police departments and one Sheriff's office in the western and southern areas of the state. The six departments were among 55 that submitted proposals in response to a solicitation issued in June by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

The solicitation invited departments with ten or fewer full time officers, and with no funds budgeted for acquiring vehicles, to submit proposals explaining their needs. The proposals were reviewed by members of the DCJS staff and the six recipients emerged as those with the greatest demonstrated need for a vehicle. The six are the Bland County Sheriff's Office, and the police departments of the Towns of Cedar Bluff, Clinchco, Halifax, Haysi and Stanley.

Secretary Decker formally presented the vehicles to the Sheriff and Police Chiefs at the Capitol. The Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services, Garth Wheeler, and Sheriff Charlie Jett, Chairman of the Criminal Justice Services Board were also present. The money to purchase the vehicles came from federal funds available to Virginia through the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program. The Haley Automotive Group provided significant assistance so that the six vehicles could be fully equipped for law enforcement use.

**PUBLIC SAFETY IS – AND WILL REMAIN – A TOP PRIORITY
OF THIS ADMINISTRATION.**

*“It is our duty as a Commonwealth to support our Public Safety Officials.”
-Secretary Marla Graff Decker*

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY

VIRGINIA GUARD COMPLETES HURRICANE SANDY RESPONSE OPERATIONS

The Virginia National Guard returned to normal operations Nov. 1, 2012, and all personnel on state active duty supporting Hurricane Sandy recovery operations were released from duty and returned to their home stations. Guard personnel began assisting Virginia State Police and local emergency response organizations late in the day Oct. 29 at numerous locations across Virginia. At the height of operations the Guard had approximately 670 personnel working across the Commonwealth. During that time they transported 42 civilians to safety, conducted almost 60 reconnaissance patrols to assess damage and to report on route trafficability and performed 10 debris reduction missions.

“Law enforcement personnel and the Virginia National Guard were the unsung heroes of the Hurricane Sandy response,” said Governor Bob McDonnell after meeting with Soldiers working on the Eastern Shore of Virginia and thanking them for working with emergency response organizations in the area.

Virginia Guard aviators from the Sandston-based 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, 91st Troop Command flew Governor Bob McDonnell, Chief of Staff Martin Kent, Secretary of Public Safety Marla Graff Decker and other cabinet members and senior state officials, as well as Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, on an aerial assessment mission to the Eastern Shore

The Guard forces were organized into multi-function response teams equipped with medium tactical trucks, Humvees and Soldiers trained and equipped as chain saw teams that were capable of performing high water transport, debris reduction and reconnaissance patrols.

The staging locations were determined in coordination with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and Virginia State Police to make sure the Guard was available to help augment Virginia State Police efforts in those areas, explained Col. Jim Ring, Virginia National Guard director of joint operations.

“The response from the Virginia National Guard was exceptional and provided tremendous assistance to the citizens of Virginia,” Secretary Decker said. “From the personnel in the Joint Operations Center to the Soldiers working side by side with state and local first responders, I am very proud of how well the Guard performed. This doesn’t just happen on its own. It takes strong leadership from the top, starting with the Adjutant General and his command staff, along with advance preparation, to give the personnel in the field a solid plan to execute. Maj. Gen. Long and his entire team deserve our thanks and praise.”

Decker received regular updates about the Guard’s efforts, and also visited the JOC, VEOC and Soldiers and VDF members working in the Eastern Shore area. “I could see that morale was good among the troops; and everyone I encountered in the community expressed their appreciation for the presence of the Virginia National Guard,” she said. “The Soldiers, Airmen and VDF members all understand the importance of what they did, and they completed critical missions during a true natural disaster.”



VIRGINIA IS BLESSED WITH TREMENDOUS LEADERSHIP AND A PHENOMENAL TEAM OF EMERGENCY RESPONDERS.

“The hard work by local emergency officials and elected leader underscores Virginia's reputation as a leader in emergency preparedness, response and recovery,” — Governor Bob McDonnell

VIRGINIA GUARD SOLDIERS RESCUE STRANDED CITIZENS IN THE EASTERN SHORE AREA

Virginia National Guard Soldiers trudged through high water and cut trees to clear a path for two rescue missions that transported seven adults and one child to safety at two locations on Cattail Road in the Mears, Va. area Oct. 30.

The rescue mission took place one day after another high water transport required carrying a citizen who was unable to walk more than 200 yards through chest-high water.

"I was very pleased to see our Soldiers cautiously working their way through high water and being mindful of downed power lines, but also aggressively and safely clearing a path to rescue these citizens in need," said Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Green, senior enlisted leader of the Virginia National Guard. "The training these Soldiers have received over the years paid off today." Green had been visiting the Soldiers and joined them on the mission.

Virginia State Police had asked the Soldiers to conduct health and welfare checks at two locations they had not been able to reach. At the first location, the Soldiers had to cut through trees to enable their medium tactical truck access to the house where a family of five, including a young child, needed assistance to leave their house that was surrounded by high water.

At the second location, Soldiers were unable to get their truck to the house where a husband and wife needed evacuation due to high water and debris. Using the family's boat, the Soldiers guided them about half a mile through the high water to the truck for evacuation.

Both groups were evacuated to family members whose homes were not threatened by high water.



PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES AND GOVERNOR McDONNELL TEAM UP TO PREPARE FOR SANDY

During an afternoon press conference in Richmond on Oct. 30, Governor Bob McDonnell updated Virginians on the Commonwealth's continued recovery from the impacts of Hurricane Sandy. The large storm began affecting portions of the Commonwealth late Saturday October 27, and snow and rain associated with the system continued in parts of the state.

Department of Emergency Management officials along with the National Guard, State Police, Department of Transportation and a host of other state agencies as well as many local teams worked tirelessly to prepare for Hurricane Sandy.

Virginia is fortunate that Sandy's impact in the Commonwealth was far less than originally anticipated. However, many parts of the state were still heavily impacted and our agencies worked quickly and efficiently in order to restore normalcy to the Commonwealth after the storm.

In addition to using emergency recovery resources in Virginia, Governor McDonnell spoke with President Obama to offer Virginia resources to ongoing recovery efforts in New Jersey, New York and other states. He also personally communicated that offer to Governor Chris Christie in New Jersey and Governor Andrew Cuomo in New York. In addition, offers of assistance were made to Connecticut and Delaware.

GOVERNOR McDONNELL ENCOURAGES DONATIONS TO THE VIRGINIAN DISASTER RELIEF FUND

Governor Bob McDonnell encourages Virginians to use the Virginian Disaster Relief Fund to help their fellow citizens recover from damaging Hurricane Sandy. The fund is a state-managed relief vehicle that allows individual Virginians and businesses to assist in recovery efforts following major natural disasters in the Commonwealth. It was created by Governor McDonnell in April 2011, following a devastating tornado outbreak in the state.

To donate please visit www.disasterrelief.vi.virginia.gov



STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY

DJJ EMPLOYEES PLAY LEAD ROLL IN CRAFTING NEW MISSION

The Department of Juvenile Justice now has a powerful and inclusive new mission, vision and values statements, thanks to a strong response to a recent survey of employees asking for their input to the statements' development process.

"About 380 employees submitted excellent, well-thought-out suggestions for what our mission and vision statements should be," said Director Mark Gooch. "About 20 more employees representing all levels of the agency then served on a steering committee that arrived at the wording of the statements. I thank all those who helped shape the direction of our agency's future."

The new mission statement reads "The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice protects the public by preparing court-involved youth to be successful citizens."

Deputy Director of Operations Ralph Thomas noted that keeping the mission statement brief, clear and understandable was a key goal throughout the process. "Employees of any successful organization should be able to easily memorize and recite its mission," Thomas said. "We believe our new mission statement achieves that. The vision statement was crafted to represent all the varied services we offer to the community and our youths."

The process also yielded a new values statement based on a foundation of "Knowledge and PRIDE" as well as a new slogan we will use on marketing materials: "One Team. New Ideas. Extraordinary Purpose."



Training Manager Patrick Bridge unveils DJJ's new slogan at the recent DJJ Leadership Summit



BON AIR WOMEN MAKE CARDS FOR THE GIVING HEART

The Re-Entry Unit at the Department of Juvenile Justice recently partnered with The Giving Heart, a non-profit organization that provides food, fellowship and essential items to those in need in the Richmond area, to provide gifts for displaced graduates. This is an effort to provide DJJ residents with volunteer opportunities to give back to the community.

Under the leadership of Mary Webley, Treatment Program Supervisor at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center, residents of the Work Education Release Program made cards and decorated picture frames to give to graduates at a graduation celebration, along with other items provided by The Giving Heart.

WE BUILD A SAFER FUTURE FOR VIRGINIA BY EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN.

"Our state and local agencies and first responders continue to review and make improvements to procedures and policies"

—Secretary Marla Graff Decker

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY

2012 FIRE OFFICER ACADEMY GRADUATES TWO CLASSES

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA), the Company Officer's Section and the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation (VFCF) hosted their 6th Annual Virginia Fire Officer Academy (VFOA) in June. This year, the event was held twice; once at the University of Richmond from June 10-15 and again at George Mason University from June 17-22.

Improving firefighter safety requires strong leadership at the company officer level. That was the key message during the Sixth Annual "Safety Through Leadership" program offered during the 2012 VFOA.

The "Safety Through Leadership" program was originally developed in 2007 as a partnership between the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, the Company Officer's Section and the National Fallen Firefighter's (NFFF) Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program ("*Everyone Goes Home*" Program).

The 5-day academy was designed to further the implementation and acceptance of the "16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives," as outlined by the Everyone Goes Home Program.

The curriculum is focused on leadership techniques, accountability, and cultural changes needed to improve firefighter safety. Modules of the program included: team building, the impact of the leader's attitude on safety, employee coaching techniques, effective communications, command presence, correcting unsafe behaviors, leading during critical events, and

dealing with employee stress. Students were required to deal with leadership challenges, by participating in role playing scenarios with actors and facilitators. Students also were required to confront common station-level issues that contribute to line of duty deaths and injuries, including: improper use of personal protective equipment, cavalier attitudes toward safety, and lack of personal accountability for safety.

Support for both academies was provided by the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation, Virginia Volunteer Workforce Solutions Program, Morning Pride, several Virginia Professional Firefighters IAFF locals and the University of Richmond.

Speakers included: Fire Chiefs Steve Cover (City of Virginia Beach) and Dave Rohr (City of Fairfax); Art Jackson of Eagles Nest Performance; Dr. Kimberly Alyn of Fire Presentations; Jackson Baynard and Mike Phibbs of Integritas Leadership Solutions; Chief Matt Tobia (Anne Arundel County, MD); Vickie Taylor, Behavior Health Specialist for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, and Chief Bryan Frieders of the Firefighter Cancer Support Network.

More than 100 fire officers from across the state applied for the 80 seats available. Those selected to attend represented all geographic areas of the state, including metropolitan, rural and suburban communities. The students came from career, volunteer, and combination departments and included a diverse group of firefighters and fire officers.



VFCF Board Chairman, Ron Mastin
Addresses GMU-VFOA graduates



VFCA President, Walt Bailey
addresses U of R-VFOA graduates

**GOVERNOR McDONNELL AND SECRETARY DECKER ARE COMMITTED TO
RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF OUR PUBLIC SAFETY PROFESSIONALS.**

"Governor McDonnell and I would like to express our immense gratitude to our first responders. Their dedication is key to the safety of the Commonwealth"
-Secretary Marla Graff Decker

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS PARTICIPATES IN RESCUE WEEK 2012

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs conducted a weeklong Technical Rescue Training School the week of August 20-24, 2012 at Barrett Learning Center in Hanover County. Students from over 30 jurisdictions throughout the Commonwealth attended the training.

During the course of the week, almost two hundred students participated in both classroom and practical exercises for Rope Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Trench Rescue, and Vehicle Rescue.



Students at Rescue Week 2012 practice their vehicle extrication skills



OPERATION BACK TO SCHOOL: ESTABLISHING AN ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE ON CAMPUSES

The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to more than 50 four-year colleges and universities and another 20 community college campuses. And as students went back to football games, tailgates and classes so did Virginia ABC. The agency's Bureau of Law Enforcement recently cracked down on alcohol violations with its Operation Back to School.

The operation ran for five weeks and resulted in nearly 400 arrests at schools throughout the state. Although special agents made an abundance of arrests for alcohol and ID-related offenses, there was no predetermined number of campuses or specific college communities on which the agency focused.

Each of the agency's eight enforcement regions was tasked with a two-fold mission: to conduct underage buyer alcohol checks in and around college and high school areas, and to take necessary enforcement action in and around college campuses.

"Operation Back To School set the tone, so to speak, with college students as they returned to campus from summer break," said Shawn Walker, Director, Bureau of Law Enforcement. "ABC special agents established a presence in numerous college communities in order to enhance public safety."

When the operation concluded, both large and small campuses in various locations had been visited. Arrests were made in Ashland, Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Danville, Emory, Farmville, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Newport News, Norfolk, Radford, Roanoke, and Williamsburg and many other college towns.

SECRETARY DECKER IS COMMITTED TO LOWERING ALCOHOL RELATED CRIMES AND SHE WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORTS OPERATION BACK TO SCHOOL.

"My administration remains committed to doing everything possible to ensure that Virginians are safe in their homes and neighborhoods."

— Governor Bob McDonnell

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC SAFETY HAS NEW DEPUTY SECRETARY

On October 1 Brian R. Swann Sr., of Midlothian Virginia, was appointed by Governor McDonnell to serve as Deputy Secretary of Public Safety.

Swann has over 30 years of distinguished public service in law enforcement. His experience ranges from the investigating of traffic accidents to establishing and managing multiagency investigative teams during the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the D.C Sniper case. Swann has experience with complex multi-defendant investigations as a manager, case agent and as an undercover operative.

Most recently in his position as Chief of ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) Criminal Groups and Gangs Branch, Swann's responsibilities included the development and management of national programs related to addressing violent criminal groups and gangs. In addition, he managed a cadre of various subject matter experts and was one of the main architects developing, implementing and managing the re-engineering of ATF's business model.

As a field manager, Swann led a multi-jurisdictional group that was instrumental in significantly reducing violent crime in a geographically focused area through the use of innovative violent crime suppression techniques, traditional investigative techniques and partnerships within the community. As a result he was awarded, along with his team, the ATF Distinguished Service Medal, ATF's highest non-combat award.

Also, in Richmond, Swann represented ATF on the executive board of the Cooperative Violence Reduction Partnership (CVRP), which was comprised of law enforcement leaders in the Richmond metropolitan area that managed the collective resources of 13 agencies to address violent crime. As a result of this collaboration, the CVRP was awarded the International Association of Chiefs of Police Webber Seavey Award.

The Office of the Secretary of Public Safety is happy to welcome Brian to the team and believe his experience and commitment to public service will prove invaluable to the Commonwealth.

SECRETARY OF PUBLIC SAFETY'S OFFICE ENTERS THE WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA

On October 18, the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety announced their launch of new Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Since that time these accounts have been used to broadcast information on Hurricane Sandy, Agency initiatives, Amber Alerts, and Virginia's first Blue Alert.

They will continue to be an active tool to inform Agencies, Stakeholders, and citizens of the Commonwealth of Public Safety milestones, events, and emergencies.

The Office of the Secretary of Public Safety is grateful for your assistance in this effort and appreciates your continued support.

If you have not already done so, please take the time to "like" **Public Safety Virginia** on Facebook and "follow" @publicsafetyva on Twitter.



GOVERNOR McDONNELL AND SECRETARY DECKER COMMEND THOSE WHO SERVE
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA.

"There is no greater role for government than providing for the safety of each one of our 8 million Virginians"
– Governor Bob McDonnell

STRIDES IN PUBLIC SAFETY

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER?

Here are important tips for protecting yourself and your home:

Get where you need to go before the weather gets bad. It's always best to stay off roads during winter storms. Most traffic crashes happen within the first two hours after a storm starts. Get road conditions by calling 511 or visiting virginia511.com

If you heat with a fireplace or wood stove: Have a professional check it, especially if it has been a long time since the last cleaning. Residue can build up and cause fires.

Safe use of space heaters: Never plug them into extension cords; plug into wall outlets. Keep space heaters at least three feet from other objects and turn them off before going to bed.

Don't use candles during power outages: Many home fires in winter are caused by candles. Flashlights are much safer. Be sure to have extra batteries.

Most importantly: Have a family Emergency plan. If your family cannot return home because of severe weather or closed roads, you need to decide now on where you will meet to reunite. Learn more about **making a plan** for winter weather and all emergencies – and get a free family emergency plan worksheet – at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.

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